



★ VIRGINIA ★
DEPARTMENT *of* ELECTIONS

Candidacy Requirements for the November 7, 2017 Special Election

Russell County
Cleveland Town Council Member

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I General Disclaimer

This Candidate Bulletin provides an overview of Virginia electoral requirements. This document does not purport to provide legal advice or binding statements of official policy. Rather, the Candidate Bulletins describe election laws found in the Code of Virginia. Applicable laws and regulations are subject to change in content and interpretation. Local charters may set different requirements. Candidates are responsible for verifying the status of, and complying with, current laws and regulations.

2 Qualifications to be a Candidate

A candidate must meet each of the following requirements:

1. Qualified to vote for and hold the office sought
2. A resident¹ of the Commonwealth for one year immediately preceding the election
3. A resident, by the time of filing, of the city or town in which he offers for election

3 Forms

A candidate must file certain documents in order to qualify to appear on the ballot.² Each form is described below.

3.1 Certificate of Candidate Qualification ([SBE-501](#))

Each candidate to appear on a ballot must file this form to certify under oath to the Department of Elections that (s)he meets the qualifications set out in the Code of Virginia.³ A candidate for local offices files this form with their general registrar.

3.2 Declaration of Candidacy ([SBE-505/520](#))

This form must be filed with the Petition of Qualified Voters.⁴ It is a required filing for independent (non-party) candidates and primary election candidates.

3.3 Petition of Qualified Voters ([SBE505/612](#))

This form is prepared and distributed by the Department of Elections in two sizes: legal and letter.⁵ Petitions must be filed together with the Declaration of Candidacy. Note: Candidates for special elections may not circulate petitions until after the issuance of the writ or order calling the election.

¹ For guidance in determining residency see § [24.2-101](#), definition of “residence,” and administrative regulations [1 VAC 20-40-20](#) and [1 VAC 20-40-30](#).

² Each document can be downloaded from our website: elections.virginia.gov.

³ Va. Code § [24.2-501](#).

⁴ Va. Code § [24.2-505](#).

⁵ [Letter](#) and [legal](#).

- A candidate for membership on the governing body or elected school board of any **county or city** must collect at least 125 signatures; or if from an election district not at large containing 1,000 or fewer registered voters, 50 signatures.
- A candidate for membership on the governing body or elected school board of any **town which has more than 1,500 registered voters** must collect at least 125 signatures; or if from a ward or other district not at large, 25 signatures
- A candidate for membership on the governing body or elected school board of any **town with 1,500 or less registered voters**, no petition shall be required.

Local charters may specify different requirements. Please review the State Board’s regulation regarding material omissions from petitions of qualified voters before circulating the Petition of Qualified Voters form.⁶

Independent (non-party) candidates may, at the time of filing, request notification of any problems with her filing that can be corrected before the filing deadline.⁷ This request must be made in writing and addressed to the secretary of the electoral board. The written request does not guarantee timely response. Certain factors, such as the number and timing of filings, may affect the electoral board’s ability to comply with the request.

A nonparty candidate has the right to appeal a determination by the electoral board that the candidate’s petitions do not contain the minimum number of signatures of qualified voters for the office sought.⁸ Candidates have 5 days from the issuance of notice of their disqualification to file their appeal with the determining body.

Appeals are conducted by the determining body in accordance with regulations set forth by the State Board of Elections.⁹ Consideration on appeal is “limited to whether or not the signatures on the petitions that were filed were reasonably rejected according to the requirements of [Title 24.2 of the Code of Virginia and regulations for petitions set forth by the State Board of Elections]. “The candidate bears the burden of proof in establishing that a sufficient number of signatures from qualified voters were timely provided.” All appeals are final and not subject to further appeal.

3.4 Statement of Economic Interests ([Ethics](#))

A candidate for **Town Council** is required to file a Statement of Economic Interests with their local general registrar.

3.5 Party Certification ([SBE-511](#))

A candidate nominated by a political party is not required to submit a Declaration of Candidacy or Petition of Qualified Voters. Party certification for local offices should be filed with both the State Board and the general registrar of the county in which the name of the candidate will appear on the ballot.¹⁰

⁶ [1 VAC 20-50-20](#).

⁷ Va. Code § [24.2-505\(D\)](#).

⁸ Va. Code § [24.2-506\(C\)](#).

⁹ [1 VAC 20-50-30](#).

¹⁰ Va. Code § [24.2-511\(B\)](#).

3.6 Statement of Organization ([CFDA-947.1](#))

While the Statement of Organization is not required to qualify for the ballot, it is required to be submitted by anyone who does qualify for the ballot in addition to other candidates seeking elected office who meet certain criteria.¹¹ The failure to file the Statement of Organization is not cause for disqualification but will subject a candidate to penalties imposed by the Campaign Finance Disclosure Act.¹²

4 What to File, Where to File, and By When

4.1 For a party candidate nominated by a method other than a primary

The Statement of Economic Interests and the Certificate of Candidate Qualification may be considered timely filed if mailed postage prepaid to the appropriate location by registered or certified mail; this receipt must be produced on demand to show the documents were mailed by the deadline.

Required Forms	Where to File	Filing Deadline
1. Statement of Economic Interests (Ethics)	General registrar in the locality of residence	Friday, August 18, 2017
2. Certificate of Candidate Qualification (SBE-501)		
3. Party Certification (SBE-511)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• State Board, and,• General registrar in the locality of residence	

4.2 For an independent (non-party) candidate

The Statement of Economic Interests and the Certificate of Candidate Qualification may be considered timely filed if mailed postage prepaid to the appropriate location by registered or certified mail; this receipt must be produced on demand to show the documents were mailed by the deadline.

Required Forms	Where to File	Filing Deadline
1. Declaration of Candidacy (SBE-505/520)	General registrar in the locality of residence	Friday, August 18, 2017
2. Petitions of Qualified Voters (SBE-506/521 [letter], SBE-506/521 [legal])		
3. Statement of Economic Interests (Ethics)		
4. Certificate of Candidate Qualification (SBE-501)		

¹¹ Va. Code § [24.2-947.1](#).

¹² Va. Code § [24.2-953.1](#).

5 Campaign Finance and Advertising

All candidates must file campaign finance reports on a schedule determined at the time they submit their Statement of Organization. These reports are filed electronically with the Department of Elections¹³ or by paper with the general registrar of the locality where the candidate resides. The Campaign Finance Disclosure Act also imposes certain requirements relating to identification of campaign advertisements and communications. Please see the Candidate Campaign Committee Summary published by the Department of Elections for specific requirements.¹⁴

6 Virginia State and Local Government Conflict of Interest Act

Effective January 1, 2016, the Virginia State and Local Government Conflict of Interest Act (COIA) requires general registrars to notify all candidates of the provisions of Chapter 31 of Title 2.2 of the Code of Virginia, the Virginia State and Local Government Conflict of Interests Act, Va. Code §§ 2.2-3100 through 2.2-3131.

COIA regulates the conduct of Virginia public officials in two basic ways: (1) disclosure requirements for reporting certain types of economic relationships on the Statement of Economic Interests form; and (2) prohibitions against certain conduct or participation in certain transactions. Please see the COIA Council's website for more information.¹⁵

¹³ [COMmittee Electronic Tracking](#) (COMET).

¹⁴ [Summary of Laws and Policies for Candidate Campaign Committees.](#)

¹⁵ <http://ethics.dls.virginia.gov/>.



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7 Election Calendar

November 7, 2017 Special Election

Election Type	Election Date	Deadlines for Filing			Last Day to Register to Vote	Deadline to Apply for Absentee Ballot
		Candidate Declarations/Petitions	Other Candidate Forms	Party Chairs Certify Candidates		
Special	November 7, 2017	<p>Independent Candidates</p> <p>Friday, August 18, 2017</p> <p>§§ 24.2-507</p>	<p>All Candidates</p> <p>Friday, August 18, 2017</p> <p>§ 24.2-503</p>	<p>Friday, August 18, 2017</p> <p>§ 24.2-511(C)</p>	<p>Monday, October 16, 2017</p> <p>11:59 p.m. (online)</p> <p>5:00 p.m. (in person or by mail)</p> <p>§ 24.2-414, 416</p>	<p>In Person: Saturday, November 4, 2017</p> <p>By Mail, Fax, or Online: Tuesday, October 31, 2017</p> <p>5:00 p.m.</p> <p>§§ 24.2-701(A), (B)(1), (B)(2)</p>
During any election, the polls are required to open at 6:00 a.m. and close at 7:00 p.m. (§ 24.2-603)						